White House Won't Elaborate

Nixon Tap Called 'Protective'

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The White House yesterday maintained that any Secret Service wiretapping of the President's brother that may have occurred would have been related to protecting the First Family.

Responding to a report in The Washington Post that the Secret Service tapped businessman F. Donald Nixon's telephone for more than a year, according to four highly reliable sources, White House spokesman Gerald L. Warren said he had discussed the matter with the President.

"If there was any monitoring of the President's immediate family by the Secret Service, it would have been related to the protective function of the Secret Service," Warren said. "I'm not going to go beyond that."

And Warren didn't, despite questioning at the White House daily briefing. At one point he even declined to say whether the President considered his brother a member of his immediate family and therefore eligible for Secret Service protection.

Meanwhile, the chairmen of two congressional subcommittees demanded a full explanation from the Secret Service.

Sen. Joseph Montoya (D-N.M.) and Rep. Tom Steed (D-Okla.), who head the Senate and House Appropriations subcommittees responsible for the Secret Service, said they wanted to know how such wiretapping could fall within the services' authorized activities.

"I think it despicable to wiretap anybody under the guise of security for the President," said Montoya, who is also a member of the Senate Watergate commit-

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tee. "This is most shocking because I didn't think the Secret Service was in the business of wiretapping."

The Washington Post story, on which Warren said he would have no comment other than his brief statement, said that the President ordered his brother's phone tapped during his first term because of fears that Donald Nixon's financial activities might embarrass the administration. These activities included a $205,000 loan Donald Nixon received from billionaire Howard Hughes in 1956 and never repaid.

In a letter to Secret Service director James J. Rowley, Montoya requested "complete details" on Secret Service wiretapping and electronic surveillance activities, including the number of taps, the reason for each tap or other action and the source of authority in each case.

"I hope you will agree with me that it is urgent for us to clear the air, either by refuting or justifying any Secret Service activity of this kind," Montoya said in the letter.

According to the sources quoted in the newspaper story, the wiretap on Donald Nixon was only one of several conducted by the Secret Service on orders from the President or his aides. Warren refused even to discuss these other reported taps.

In other comments at the White House briefing Warren said that the President thought his news conference of Wednesday, his second in as many weeks, "went very well."

Warren also said that the President's comment that stories about campaign fund diversion to his San Clemente property received "eight-column heads in most of the papers of this country" while "the retractions ended up back with the corset ads for the most part" was "not directed to the press in general."

White House press spokesmen always maintain that Mr. Nixon does not watch televised news reports. Asked, if this be so, how the President knows about the "leers and sneers of commentators" he described yesterday, Warren replied:

"The President communicates with a great number of people."